

314 YUMAN TRIBES OF THE GILA RIVER

845 apply only to twins as children, for aged Kutox told me he had twin younger brothers, the one surviving being now an old man.

J—, his older sister told me, is said to be from the village of twins. At birth he was so tiny they did not think he would survive. When he was four he was hardly bigger than a baby of six months. His mother took him to all the shamans, who could do nothing. Finally she applied to one married to her mother's sister. He declared he had seen this boy in his dreams. He directed, "Bring the boy, and let him stay a month if he likes me." The old shaman told them to give the boy everything he wanted, which they did. The old man gave him a horse. When the boy wanted a new horse, he would say, "Take the old horse back," which meant that the shaman should give him a colt, which he did. J— is now a strapping six-footer of thirty.

[601] A curious point was that the first born of twins was called the younger. The reason given was that one always let a child, a younger person, go through a doorway first. The twins called each other in this fashion younger and older brother.¹ It was absolutely necessary that some such decision be made, considering that age distinctions figure at every turn in the kinship system.

● 163 Plural births other than twins were unknown to my informants. Mrs. Redbird knew of three cases of twin births among 845 people now living, a number which might have been predicted in a population of less than three hundred. Twins were called xavō'kc, "two."

847 It is difficult to tell how frequently abortion was practiced in the old days: it is common enough today. A cloth was tied tightly around the abdomen, draughts of a boiling hot tea made of icu' (a plant growing near the river) were taken, and the constricting process repeated until the embryo was killed. (My informant had never heard of pressing the abdomen on a rock.)

854 The cradle was prepared before the baby was born. Women [462] gathered the materials for it because they knew best what the size should be, but men always put the frame together since they could lash it more tightly. Various women might prepare its several parts, which were assembled by some older woman of the family. It was distinctly preferred not to use a cradle that had belonged to some other woman. A cradle might be kept for the successive use of one's own children, or one gotten from a near

¹ This explains why twins in the myths are called older and younger brother.